

Safe Infant Sleep Toolkit

For Providers and Community Advocates



2024



Created by the Safe Kids Vermont
Safe Sleep Committee





Safe Infant Sleep Toolkit

Safe Sleep refers to a set of recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) based on research on what can help reduce the risk of all sleep-related infant deaths. The SUID (Sudden Unexpected Infant Death) rate includes sleep-related infant deaths such as accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed.

Data from 2016-2020 puts Vermont among the states with the lowest SUID rates in the nation. However, due to Vermont's size this ranking is unreliable due to instability in death rates. Therefore, it continues to be imperative that Safe Sleep messages and education are available to all members of the community who provide infant care or may be a resource for those providing infant care.

This toolkit will provide you with current resources and messages for the 2024 Vermont Safe Sleep Campaign.

What is Safe Sleep?

Safe Sleep is focused on creating a sleep environment that reduces the risk of all sleep-related deaths for infants under the age of one. This includes supine positioning (baby on their back), use of a separate firm, flat sleep surface for baby, and no soft bedding or other items.

Additional recommendations to reduce SIDS and Sleep-Related Deaths include human milk feeding, use of a pacifier, immunization, and avoiding exposure to harmful substances.

For more information, review the AAP Policy Statement and Technical Report available online.

Policy Statement published June 21, 2022

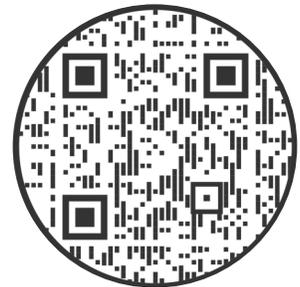
[Sleep-Related Infant Deaths: Updated 2022 Recommendations for Reducing Infant Deaths in the Sleep Environment](#)

Technical Report published June 21, 2022

[Evidence Base for 2022 Updated Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleeping Environment to Reduce the Risk of Sleep-Related Infant Deaths](#)

You may also complete the [Safe Sleep Education Module](#) through the Vermont Child Health Improvement Program (VCHIP) for free online. The module was designed for nurses and clinical care staff but is informative and beneficial for anyone wishing to engage in safe sleep education in their community.

Review the Safe Sleep Campaign Website UVMHealth.org/SafeSleep to learn more about Safe Sleep and the key messages being promoted by this toolkit. You can also access the website by scanning the QR CODE.



Additional Resources and Links:

- American Academy of Pediatrics HealthyChildren.org
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission CPSC.gov
- Safe Infant Sleep SafeInfantSleep.org
- Charlie's Kids CharliesKids.org
- Kids for Cribs CribsforKids.org
- The Period of Purple Crying PurpleCrying.info

Materials Available in Toolkit

Materials for the Safe Sleep Campaign focus on three pillars of education: Safe Sleep, Sleep Tips, and Products to Avoid. Materials will be available in additional languages in the coming months.

Brochures

There are three brochures available as part of the 2024 Vermont Safe Sleep Campaign.



Sleep Safely

FOR MORE INFORMATION
on how to create a safe sleep environment for your baby, visit UVMHealth.org/SafeSleep

American Academy of Pediatrics
HealthyChildren.org

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
CPSC.gov

Safe Infant Sleep
SafeInfantSleep.org

Charlie's Kids
CharliesKids.org

Kids for Cribs
CribsforKids.org

The Period of Purple Crying

Safe Sleep Vermont

*If using a sleep sack or swaddle, be sure it is not labeled as "Weighted"
*“Weighted” sleep items were identified as unsafe by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

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Sleep Safely

The focus of this brochure is to review the basics of safe sleep recommendations. It includes some information on normalizing infant sleep and highlights where to find support as a parent or caregiver. This brochure is designed for everyone.

Finding Support

While frequent waking for baby is normal and healthy, it can be very difficult for parents. Lack of sleep can make it feel hard to follow safe sleep practices. If you are struggling, it's important to reach out for support.

- Talk to your Pediatrician about strategies specific to your child's needs.
- Ask family members, friends, or someone you trust to watch baby while you nap or catch up on sleep.
- PCAVT's Parent Helpline 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373).

Sleep Tips for Parents

The focus of this brochure is on tips for parents to help their baby sleep, while also covering why frequent wake ups or struggles to settle are developmentally expected for infants. This brochure is designed to be supportive of parents or caregivers struggling to follow Safe Sleep due to exhaustion and other external pressures and stressors.



Sleep Tips for Babies

Finding Support

While frequent waking for baby is normal and healthy, it can be very difficult for parents. Being stressed and exhausted can make settling baby back to sleep even harder.

Take a deep breath. Count to 5.

- Ask family members, friends, or someone you trust to watch baby while you nap or catch up on sleep.
- Talk to your Pediatrician about strategies specific to your child's needs.
- PCAVT's Parent Helpline 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373).

For more information, visit UVMHealth.org/SafeSleep

What is Infant Sleep?

Babies do not have regular sleep cycles until about 6 months of age. While newborns sleep about 16 to 17 hours per day, they may only sleep for 1 or 2 hours at a time. Frequent waking is developmentally appropriate for babies. Talk to your baby's pediatrician if you have any concerns about how they are sleeping.

Sleeping in a safe sleep space can be a hard adjustment for baby from the warmth of the womb. It may take time for them to adapt. While it can be a struggle for both baby and caregivers, there are tips to help.

Safe Sleep Vermont

Sometimes babies can't be soothed and that's okay. It does not harm a child's development. If you are stressed or overwhelmed, take care of yourself first and let baby stay in the safety of the crib. Crying is not harmful if you need space.



Products to avoid for your newborn

FOR MORE INFORMATION
on how to create a safe sleep environment for your baby, visit UVMHealth.org/SafeSleep

American Academy of Pediatrics
HealthyChildren.org

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
CPSC.gov

Safe Infant Sleep
SafeInfantSleep.org

Charlie's Kids
CharliesKids.org

Kids for Cribs
CribsforKids.org

The Period of Purple Crying
PurpleCrying.info

Safe Sleep Vermont

If a sleep sack or swaddle is labeled as "Weighted" then it is unsafe according to the American Academy of Pediatrics and should not be used on or near a sleeping infant.

What are unsafe sleep products?

Choosing sleep products for your baby can be overwhelming. It can be hard to tell what products are safe.

The Safe Sleep for Babies Act of 2021 law made new federal safety standards for baby sleep products. As a result, some previously popular products are banned for being unsafe. While these products are no longer manufactured, they may be available in second hand stores or passed down from older children.

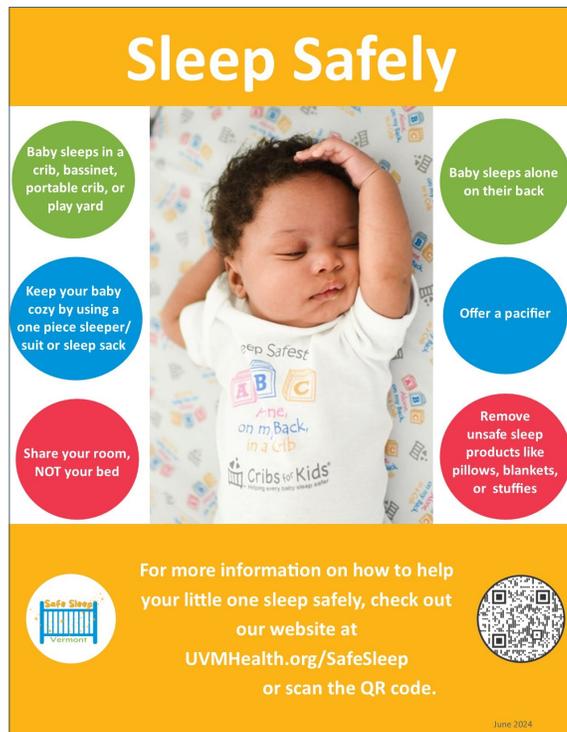
This brochure will review unsafe sleep products for infants.

Products to Avoid for Your Newborn

The focus of this brochure is on unsafe products that are marketed to parents and caregivers or often handed down to me by friends and family. It covers both banned products and unsafe sleep products. This brochure is designed for expectant parents and carers of newborns.

Flyers

There are four flyers available as part of the 2024 Vermont Safe Sleep Campaign.



Sleep Safely

Baby sleeps in a crib, bassinet, portable crib, or play yard

Baby sleeps alone on their back

Keep your baby cozy by using a one piece sleeper/suit or sleep sack

Offer a pacifier

Share your room, NOT your bed

Remove unsafe sleep products like pillows, blankets, or stuffies

For more information on how to help your little one sleep safely, check out our website at UVMHealth.org/SafeSleep or scan the QR code.

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Sleep Safely

This flyer reviews the basics of safe sleep recommendations and then directs the audience to the safe sleep website for additional information.

Sleep Tips for Babies (2)

There are two flyers under Sleep Tips for Babies. The first is “Why isn’t my baby sleeping?” and the second is “Sleep Tips for Baby”. The first flyer empathizes with parents and caregivers on the struggles of newborn sleep and tries to shift expectations away from baby sleeping through the night. The second flyer is tips that may help parents and caregivers to improve infant sleep.



Why isn't my baby sleeping?

Babies do not have regular sleep cycles until about 6 months of age. While newborns sleep about 16 to 17 hours per day, they may only sleep for 1 or 2 hours at a time. Frequent waking is developmentally appropriate for babies. Sleep regressions or struggles are normal and to be expected.

Finding Support

While frequent waking for baby is normal and healthy, it can be very difficult for parents. Being stressed and exhausted can make settling baby back to sleep even harder. Crying is not harmful for your baby.

Take a Deep Breath.
You are not alone.

- Talk to your Pediatrician about strategies specific to your child's needs.
- Ask family members, friends, or someone you trust to watch baby while you nap or catch up on sleep.
- PCAVT's Parent Helpline 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373).

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Sleep Tips for Babies

- Talk or sing to them.
- Put a hand on their belly or chest.
- Hold and rock or rub their back.
- Swaddle your baby if not yet showing signs of rolling.
- Place a pacifier in their mouth or assist them to get their hand to their mouth to suck.
- Offer breastmilk or formula.
- Avoid putting your baby in an unsafe sleep space, such as in a swing, a car seat, or in your bed during the night.

Sometimes babies can't be soothed back to sleep and that's okay. If you are stressed or overwhelmed, take care of yourself first and let baby stay in the safety of the crib.

For more information visit UVMHealth.org/SafeSleep

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Products to avoid for your newborn

-  Baby Recliners & Bean Bags
-  Baby Nest & Positioners
-  Inclined Sleepers
-  Bumper Pads
-  Bolster & Wedge Positioner

* Sleep sacks or swaddles labeled as "weighted" are to be avoided

 Learn more at UVMHealth.org/SafeSleep 

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Products to Avoid for your Newborn

This flyer is a quick visual to demonstrate which common items promoted for infants are unsafe for sleep and to be avoided.

Social Media Posts

There are posts available for social media. Copies of materials can be requested by contacting VTSafeKids@UVMHealth.org. If needed, virtual materials may be customized upon request to meet branding requirements of your social media pages.



Safe Sleep for Babies Video. 57 Second video shows images of unsafe sleep followed by messaging on how to practice safe sleep. The video can be shared on Facebook or Instagram.

[Video Preview](#)

Suggested Caption

(Long) Safe sleep guidelines have changed a lot over the last 30 years. Blankets, pillows, and crib bumpers are all unsafe to be in baby's sleep environment. Luckily, what is safe sleep is straight forward. Baby should sleep alone, on their back, on a consumer product safety

commission approved crib, bassinet, portable crib, or play yard, with only a fitted sheet. A sleep sack or one-piece sleeper can help keep baby warm in cold Vermont winters, but make sure they aren't weighted.

(Short) Unsafe sleep is dangerous for infants. Practice safe sleep for every nap and overnight by making sure baby sleeps alone, on their back, consumer product safety commission approved crib, bassinet, portable crib, or play yard.

Sleep Safely Slide Deck. A set of 5 images that covers what safe sleep is and more importantly why an infant or baby may not be sleeping through the night. Individual slides can be used for Facebook or the whole slide deck can be posted on Instagram. [Slide Deck Preview](#)

Suggested Captions

(Long) Frequent waking is developmentally appropriate for babies. Growing babies will not have regular sleep schedules until at least 6 months. While newborns sleep about 16 to 17 hours per day, they may only sleep for 1 or 2 hours at a time.

When babies who normally sleep well suddenly starts struggling to settle for sleep or waking up more frequently at night, it is known as "sleep regression". A change in baby's sleep patterns can occur when babies are teething, have growth spurts, reaching new milestones, or are sick.

Your pediatrician is a great resource for any concern about your baby's sleeping habits.



(Short) Frequent waking is developmentally appropriate for babies. Newborns wake up every 1-2 hours, and most babies don't have a regular sleep schedule until at least 6 months. Talk with your child's pediatrician if you have concerns.

(Short) Even when it seems like your baby is on a regular sleep schedule, their sleep patterns can change, and they may wake up more often throughout the night. This is called sleep regression and it's a normal and expected when babies are teething, having a growth spurt, reaching new milestones, or are sick. Talk with your child's pediatrician if you have concerns.

Products to Avoid for your Newborn Slide Deck. A set of 9 images that covers products currently banned or identified as unsafe sleep items for infants. This message helps overwhelmed parents navigate newborn registries and shopping.

[Slide Deck Preview](#)

Suggested Captions

(Long) Choosing sleep products for your baby can be overwhelming. It can be hard to tell what products are safe.

Babies should only sleep alone, on their back, in a consumer product safety commission approved crib, bassinet, portable crib, or play yard.

Unsafe products increase the risk for suffocation, entrapment, and or strangulation. Unsafe products include inclined sleepers, bumper pads, baby nests or positions, bolsters & wedges, baby recliners, and weighted sleepers, swaddles, and blankets.

(Short) Parents and caregivers need to know which sleep products for babies are safe, and which are not. Before you buy anything, remove these unsafe products from your shopping list.

(Short) Inclined sleepers are dangerous because the infant's head can fall forward cutting off their airway. Baby should always sleep on their back on a firm, flat surface.

(Short) Bumper pads for cribs are banned in the US as they increase the risk of suffocation, entrapment, and strangulation. The safest place for a baby to sleep is one with only a fitted mattress.

(Short) Baby nests, positioners, wedges, or bolsters pose a suffocation risk if a baby rolls over or moves, and can trap babies if placed close to the sides of a crib. The safest thing to put in baby's sleep space is nothing but a fitted sheet on a firm flat surface.

(Short) Skip bean bag or a foam-based recliners. The safest place for baby is alone in a consumer product safety commission approved crib, bassinet, portable crib, or play yard with nothing but a fitted sheet.





Shop for Safe Sleep Story Post. This story post can go in Instagram or Facebook stories or be a stand alone post on Facebook. It focuses on the few things you do need to practice safe sleep.

[Image Preview](#)

Suggested Captions

(Long) The shopping list for safe sleep is a short one! In fact, many products advertised for babies, like nests, positions, inclined sleepers, and weighted swaddles are dangerous and can increase the risk for suffocation, entrapment, and strangulation.

The only thing you need for baby to sleep safely is a consumer product safety commission approved crib, bassinet, portable crib, or play yard, a sleep sack or one-piece sleeper, and a fitted sheet. The sleep sack or one-piece sleeper will keep them warm and cozy in bed, but make sure they aren't weighted.

(Short) Safely put babies to sleep laying on their back on a firm, flat mattress in their crib, bassinet, or play yard. Keep baby cozy by dressing them in a one-piece sleeper or sleep sack.

Share your room. This image can be used to promote the message of room-sharing, not bed-sharing, on any social media platform. It has a static star overlay similar to the one available in the Safe Sleep for Babies video.

[Image Preview.](#)

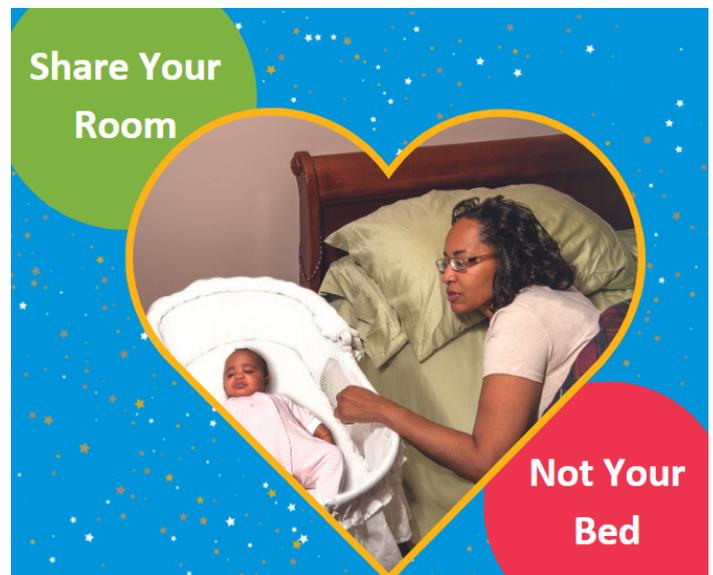
Suggested Captions

(Long) Baby should share your room, not your bed.

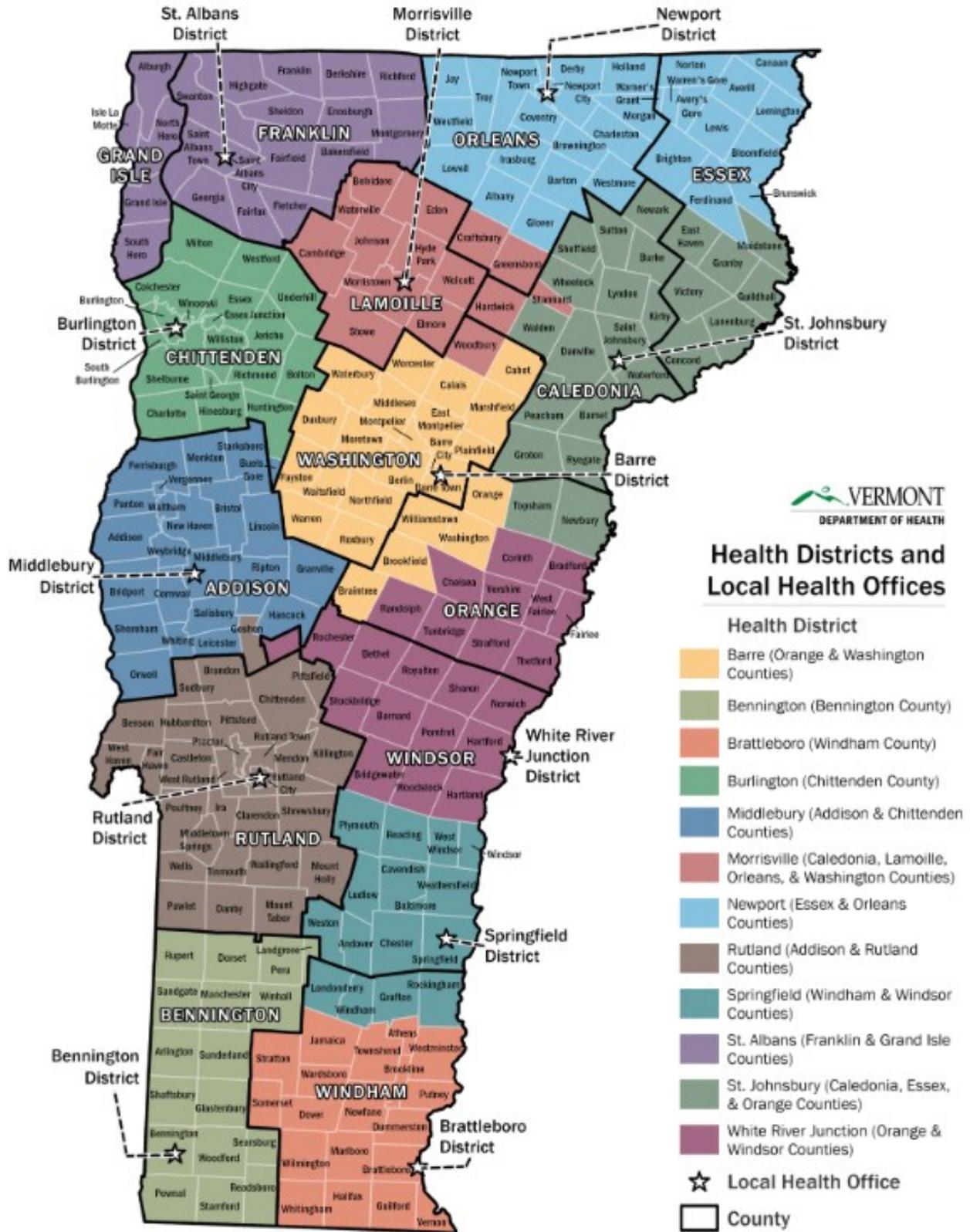
Room sharing means keeping your baby's crib, play yard, or bassinet in your bedroom, close to your bed for at least the first 6 months. This makes it easier to comfort or feed your baby, and then place them in their own sleep space when you're ready to go to sleep.

Besides your bed, avoid falling asleep with your baby in other spots, too. The risk of sleep-related infant death is higher when infants sleep with someone on a couch, soft armchair, or cushion.

(Short) Share your room with baby not your bed. Put your baby's crib, bassinet, or play yard close to your bed, and make sure they sleep alone on a firm, flat mattress. Room sharing is recommended for the first 6 months of life.



Print copies of the brochures may be requested through the Vermont Department of Health Office of Local Health Family and Child Health Coordinators. Use the map below to identify your local health office or by using the [Find your Local Health Office](#) website. The e-mails for each office are listed on the next page.



Barre Local Health Office

5 Perry St., Suite 250
Barre, VT 05641

888-253-8786 or 802-479-4200

AHS.VDHBarre@vermont.gov

Bennington Local Health Office

324 Main St., Suite 2
Bennington, VT 05201

800-637-7347 or 802-447-3531

AHS.VDHBennington@vermont.gov

Bartleboro Local Health Office

232 Main Street, Suite 3
Brattleboro, VT 05301

888-253-8805 or 802-257-2880

AHS.VDHBrattleboro@vermont.gov

Burlington Local Health office

108 Cherry Street, Suite 102
PO Box 70
Burlington, VT 05402

888-253-8803 or 802-863-7323

AHS.VDHBurlington@vermont.gov

Middlebury Local Health Office

156 So. Village Green, Suite 102
Middlebury, VT 05753

888-253-8804 or 802-388-4644

AHS.VDHMiddlebury@vermont.gov

Morrisville Local Health Office

63 Professional Drive, Suite #1
Morrisville, VT 05661

888-253-8798 or 802-888-7447

AHS.VDHMorrisville@vermont.gov

Newport Local Health Office

100 Main Street, Suite 220
Newport, VT 05855

800-952-2945 or 802-334-6707

AHS.VDHNewport@vermont.gov

Rutland Local Health Office

300 Asa Bloomer State Office Building
88 Merchants Row
Rutland, VT 05701

888-253-8802 or 802-786-5811

AHS.VDHRutland@vermont.gov

Springfield Local Health Office

100 Mineral Street, Suite 104
Springfield, VT 05156

888-296-8151 or 802-289-0600

AHS.VDHSpringfield@vermont.gov

St. Albans Local Health Office

27 Federal Street, Suite 201
St. Albans, VT 05478

888-253-8801 or 802-524-7970

AHS.VDHStAlbans@vermont.gov

St. Johnsbury Local Health Office

107 Eastern Avenue, Suite 9
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

800-952-2936 or 802-748-5151

AHS.VDHStJohnsbury@vermont.gov

White River Junction Local Health Office

118 Prospect Street, Suite 300
White River Jct., VT 05001

888-253-8799 or 802-295-8820

AHS.VDHWhiteRiverJct@vermont.gov

Members of the Safe Sleep Committee:

SAFE KIDS VERMONT

Safe Kids Vermont is a coalition of individuals and organizations across the state of Vermont dedicated to keeping children and teens healthy and safe by preventing injury.

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

With a focus on prevention, the Vermont Department of Health offers many programs and initiatives to help Vermonters live fuller, healthier lives from birth through old age.

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS VERMONT CHAPTER (AAPVT)

AAPVT is dedicated to improving the physical, mental, and social health and well-being of the state's infants, children, adolescents and young adults.

VERMONT DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (DCF)

DCF's mission is to foster the healthy development, safety, well-being and self-sufficiency of Vermonters.

PREVENT CHILD ABUSE VERMONT(PCAVT)

The Vermont Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America and the National Circle of Parents mission is to promote and support healthy relationships within families, schools and communities to eliminate child abuse.

SAFE INFANT SLEEP

Safe Infant Sleep is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing peer-to-peer caregiver support and education. In addition, they provide safe sleep items such as portable cribs and sleep sacks to those who otherwise don't have access.

Vermont Child Health Improvement Program (VCHIP)

VCHIP is a population-based maternal and child health services research and quality improvement program of the University of Vermont.

ALL BABY NEWBORN CARE

Vermont's only Certified Newborn Care Specialist, passionate about providing caregivers with up-to-date, evidence-based care and education to ensure healthy foundations for your baby and whole family support.

UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

The University of Vermont Children's Hospital provides high-quality, child-friendly care with a patient and family-centered approach that improves the health of children throughout Vermont and northern New York.

VERMONT CENTER FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES (VCCYF)

The Vermont Center for Children, Youth, and Families provides care from a family-based framework to support the emotional and behavioral health of children and their families.



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For Questions, e-mail

VTSafeKids@UVMHealth.org

Or visit

UVMHealth.org/SafeSleep